



October 1999

Fact Sheet

Background

The National Drought Policy Act of 1998 (the Act), Public Law 105-199, was signed by the President on July 16, 1998. The Act establishes the National Drought Policy Commission (NDPC) to provide advice and recommendations on the creation of an integrated, coordinated Federal policy designed to prepare for and respond to serious drought emergencies.

Purpose

The NDPC is charged with making recommendations on:

- How to better integrate Federal drought laws and programs with ongoing State, local, and tribal programs;
- How to improve public awareness of the need for drought mitigation, prevention, and response;
- Whether all Federal drought preparation and response programs should be consolidated under one existing Federal agency, and if so, identify the agency.

The NDPC is to conduct a thorough study and, no later than eighteen months after the date of the enactment of the Act, submit a report to the President and Congress which contains a detailed statement of the findings and conclusions of the NDPC, together with its recommendations for such legislation and administrative actions as it considers appropriate.

Members

In addition to the Secretary of Agriculture, who will chair the committee, other members include:

- The Secretary of the Interior or a designee;
- The Secretary of the Army or a designee;
- The Secretary of Commerce or a designee;
- The Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency or a designee;
- The Administrator of the Small Business Administration or a designee;
- Two persons nominated by the National Governors' Association and appointed by the President -- one governor of a State east of the Mississippi River and one governor of a State west of the Mississippi River;
- A person nominated by the National Association of Counties and appointed by the President;
- A person nominated by the United States Conference of Mayors and appointed by the President; and

- Six persons, appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture in coordination with the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of the Army, representing groups acutely affected by drought emergencies. Such groups include the agricultural production community, credit community, rural and urban water associations, Native Americans, and fishing and environmental interests.

The public may send comments to:

USDA/FSA/AO
National Drought Policy Commission
STOP 0501
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250-0501

or e-mail: leona.dittus@usda.gov

A copy of the National Drought Policy Act and other related information is available on the NDPC website at www.fsa.usda.gov/drought

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.